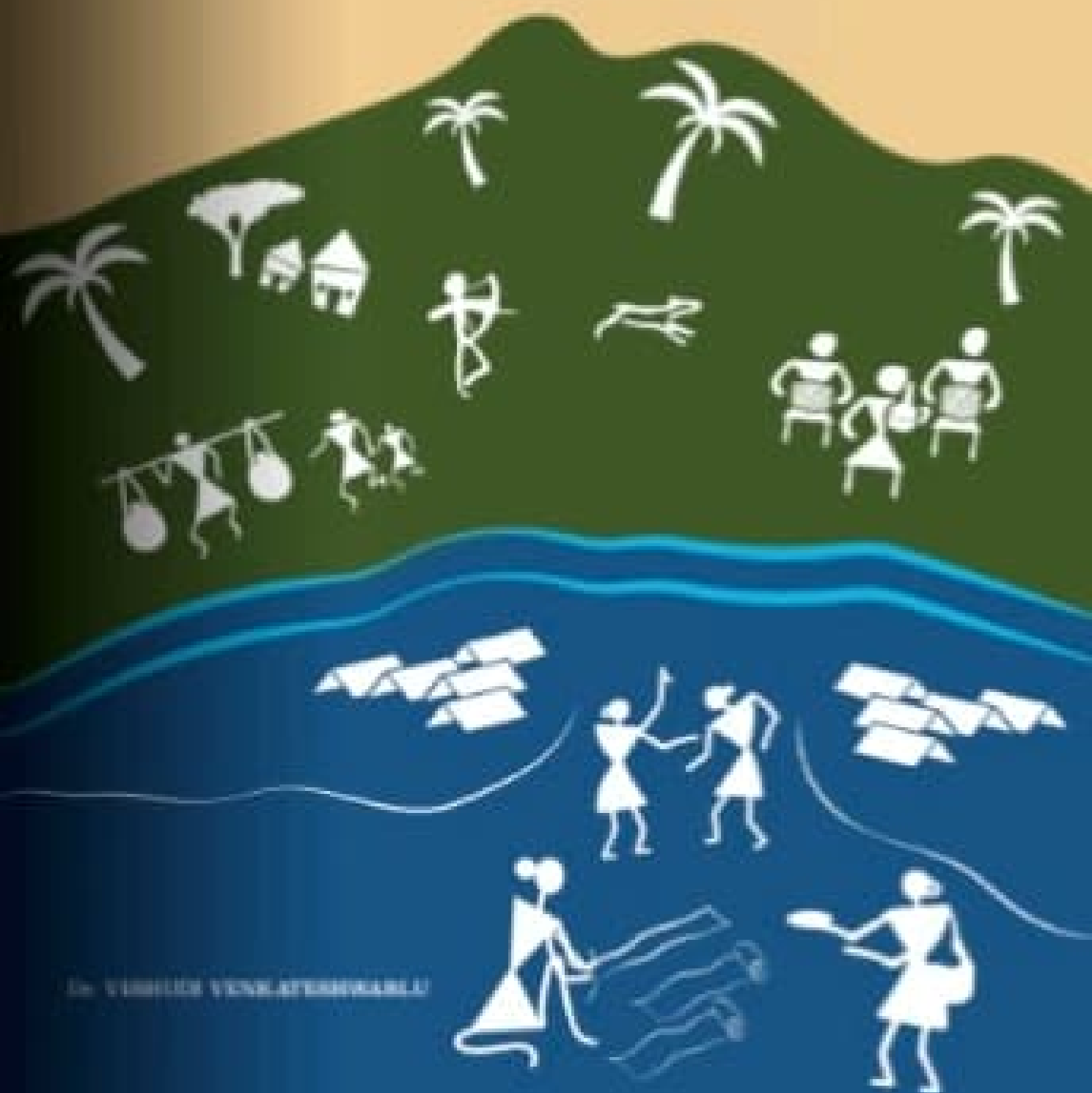


# BEDA (BUDGA) JANGAM

A NOMADIC TRIBE OF SOUTHERN INDIA: IT'S RELIGIOUS JOURNEY  
FROM TRIBE TO CASTE



Dr. VISHNU VENKATESWARLU

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(A NOMADIC TRIBE OF SOUTHERN INDIA:  
IT'S RELIGIOUS JOURNEY FROM TRIBE TO CASTE)



# **BEDA (BUDGA) JANGAM**

**(A NOMADIC TRIBE OF SOUTHERN INDIA:  
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***DEDICATED** to loving memory of my late Mother and Father; their quiet determination, willingness to see me the best in the people and question injustice.*



**LATE VIBHUDI BUCHAIAH & LATE VIBHUDI BHAVANAMMA**





**Arvind Tiwari**



## **FOREWORD**

Perhaps as largest of the world's population lives India, Boda (Budga) Jangam caste mostly South India, in which inherited caste by saivam and vira-saivam is a significant aspect of social organization and identity, shaping opportunity and the experience of discrimination. Although readily overlooked, the influence of caste has become truly religious through population mobility and in diaspora communities in south India. Finding a way to view Boda (Budga) Jangam caste in its religious journey from tribe to caste, lost its tribal identity, misunderstand as caste and lost its rights and opportunities in modern times and acquiring their rights and opportunities is a challenge. This book is a response to that challenge.

It is noteworthy to mention that my association with Dr. Vibhudi Venkateshwarlu started in 2017 when he was awarded Post-Doctoral Fellowship by Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi in the subject - Law on "UN Convention on Indigenous People: Social, Cultural and Political Status of Boda (Budga) Jangam Caste" and he got registered under my Advisorship at TISS, Mumbai. The report was submitted in 2021 as part of Post-Doctoral fellowship. The present book is culmination of this research study undertaken by him.

The present volume depicts a critical analysis of the Boda (Budga) Jangam transformation from tribe to caste, by conversion into several religions and law not only opens up a neglected perspective on the caste but also shows us that the law provides insight into a range of social, political and institutional responses to the caste and its discriminatory effects. Indeed, the manner in which Caste is conceived in law, how legal regulation of caste is sought or resisted and the judicial processes involved are today inseparably part of this complex institution. This aside, Boda (Budga) Jangam caste aligns thinking on caste in vira-saivam to the contemporary reality in which the sociological facts of caste are inseparable from its life in law and litigation at national and international levels. Indeed concern of law is not the social scientific description of caste but the



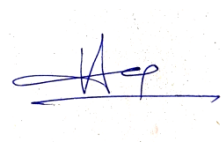
mitigation of its potentially negative effects, inequality and discrimination and the conception and definition of these so as to allow legal protection. This book provides a window on the modern social life of Bada (Budga) Jangam caste as much as an education on how caste is circumscribed by law.

It is not only law in theory but also law in practice that underpins the insights of Bada (Budga) Jangam caste. Indeed, the intellectual analyses provided in this book has been developed and refined from law & public policy perspective. The unparalleled acuity of conceptualizations, observations and grasp of the subtleties of caste is owed in part to this practical engagement in the South India alongside keen awareness of the legal landscape in national and international.

Dr. Vibhudi has made critical analyses through empirical evidences and also adhered ethical framework. Through, an intense analyses the author brings an activist's perspective on Bada (Budga) Jangam caste discrimination in the South India and discusses legal framework for its prevention. In contemporary scenario where identity-based socio-legal challenges are discussed, present book provides an empirical based critical analyses and the way forward to strengthen rights of Bada (Budga) Jangam.

I hope that this publication would encourage enthusiastic social sciences, tribal and legal studies students, researchers and faculty members to take more projects of this nature.

I extend my best wishes to Dr. Vibhudi for publication of this book.



**Dr. Arvind Tiwari**

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**Dr. N. R. VENKATESHAM**  
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## **ABOUT THE BOOK**

Researchers are great achievers who dig up the past and present of human evolution history in those periods of our time. When we read researchers' works, they inspire us. From those writings, it is as if a researcher or scientist is talking to us and explaining the facts he has discovered. In this way, centuries of knowledge are passed down to future generations. Human society is taking a step forward by building state-of-the-art scientific buildings on their foundations.

I read the book 'Beda (Budga) Jangam' (A Nomadic Tribe of Southern India: Its Religious Journey from Tribe to Caste) written by Dr. Vibhudi Venkateshwarlu. He has shown excellent skill in collecting and analyzing research data related to his post-doctoral fellowship. He had already done his M.Phil., Ph.D, so he excelled in research. If you look at his bibliography, you can understand his enthusiasm. In today's world, it's amazing to have people so persistent.

In this book, he compares Beda (Budga) Jangam, Chenchu, and Bedar. To clarify other aspects of these tribes, he examines their customs, traditions, rituals of birth and death, living habitats, professions, etc. From the Middle Ages (approximately from the third century) to the present day the conditions, lifestyles and similarities between these tribes have been explained. It is believed that the Bedars, Badagas, Ramoshis, Pendaris, and Beda (Budga) Jangams were one tribe at once.

In the first chapter, the historical developments, the origins of the Chenchu tribe, the sections formed in the later period, and the Historical, Religious and Political reasons for losing tribal characteristics and evolving into a caste of Beda (Budga) Jangam are clearly explained.

In the second chapter, the Bedar tribe's basic characteristics are given and a genealogy is presented. This is how the Bedars established a vassal kingdom in Shorapur (Surapura) and built a fort in 1806 A.D. It is written

that 18 kings ruled from 1515 to 1858. He told about religious conditions in medieval times, the birth of Veerashaivism and the formation of castes.

In the third chapter, the birth of Jangam, the formation of Jangams from the upper classes to the beggar Jangams, the priest Jangams, *tribal Jangams* and the labouring castes, the depressed caste, how the Beda (Budga) Jangam ancestors lost their tribe characteristics and remained a caste etc., was explained.

In the fourth chapter, the description of surnames of the Beda (Budga) Jangam caste people, their population in the census, deity worship, marriage system, rituals, customs, occupations, food habitats, housing and caste speciality is thoroughly examined. It examines issues such as language, the Kula Panchayat system, and social status.

In the fifth chapter, the rituals and traditions of the Bedars and Beda (Budga) Jangam are compared. He pointed out similarities in some customs and surnames. He explained the differences between Hinduism, Veerashaivism and Lingayatism. Brahmanism and rituals govern the Hindu religion, while Veerashaivism is a caste-based religion founded by Basavanna in opposition to Brahmanism. In Hinduism, he says, because of the caste system prescribed by Manu, generational differences were created, freedom and equality were lacking, and the society was divided into upper and lower castes. Veerashaiva Jangam (Jangama Devara) and Beda (Budga) Jangam castes and their characteristics and similarities are given side by side in a table. The Veerashaiva Lingayat Jangams are the upper class while the Beda (Budga) Jangams are the scheduled Caste who live miserably at the bottom with indifferences. According to him the Beda (Budga) Jangam is Tribal Jangam became untouchable, outcaste and depressed caste finally identified as scheduled caste.

False caste popularisation in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Telangana where Veerashaiva Jangams (BC-A) who have such rules claim that they belong to Beda (Budga) Jangams (SC) caste. Getting scheduled caste certificates as Beda (Budga) Jangam, getting posts in public employment, obtaining seats in higher educational institutions and many other government subsidies.

Searching for such injustice, regardless of caste, the ruling classes do not give a damn about what is done, the writer expresses his awe. It is hoped that his research points will help move the achievement forward and take appropriate measures. This will be helpful for the Beda (Budga) Jangam who are left behind in all fields and despair that the future is void.

The author includes six tables as an appendix to this book. In this, additional information about the tribes and castes mentioned in the book

along with population details has been provided. Description of the Census of Hyderabad State, Madras presidency, Bombay presidency/Maharashtra, Mysore/Karnataka, and Odisha State from 1871 to 2011. Details of Beda (Budga) Jangam Advocates in Table-3, Beda (Budga) Jangam doctors in Table-4 and NRI in Table-5. Table-6 gives details of the resource persons.

Dr. Vibhudi Venkateshwarlu wrote this theoretical book with intense interest and a constant desire to share new things with the world. He immersed himself in the study and looked at the authors' census reports. The origins, changes and additions of tribes are reviewed and announced. The chair has made this book a treasure trove of information about the origins and stages of the evolution of caste. This book will entertain prospective researchers as a reference book. Contribute as a source of information for observers, interested parties, and readers. I sincerely appreciate Dr. Vibhudi Venkateshwalu for such fundamental work.



## PREFACE

Bringing the history of the Beda (Budga) Jangam community down to the present day and including the latest archaeological and sociological discoveries has been felt necessary. Prof.'s admirable works (Retd.) *N.R. Venkatesham* (in Telugu) and Prof. *K.M. Metry, Bala Gurumurthy, Pratap Bhurupi* and *Aswa Ramu* (in Kannada), the pioneers of Beda (Budga) Jangam social and cultural studies, are now, in both point of fact and in general outlook, out of date, and the whole subject requires to be re-stated. The present work fills the gap. The book is written primarily for students (Legal, historical, Social and Political Sciences) and researchers (all social sciences including law) who are doing their research in universities. As well as policymakers (both at the centre and state levels), in view, however, of the greatly increased interest in South India displayed by English readers, it is hoped that it may also appeal to the general reader who requires a simple, non-technical account of the community and its people.

It will remove confusion between the identity of Beda (Budga) Jangam and Vira-Saiva Jangam policymakers and the general public. It will significantly increase interest in the Beda (Budga) Jangam community in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Telangana. It is also useful for the reference of demography and official records of Beda (Budga) Jangam from 1881 to 2011. Origin of the Beda (Budga) Jangam and its roots in South India, its journey from tribe to caste is empirically and comparatively proved. To conduct this research work, I consulted several persons from the Beda (Budga) Jangam, Chenchus, Bedars, and Vira-Saiva Jangams. In completing this book, I received information from community members and was greatly supported by them. Beda (Budga) Jangam caste subject expert Prof. N. R. Venkatesham, and caste leaders like Sirigiri Manyam, Kadamanchi Sahadevudu, Kalyanam Dhanunjayudu and Ponnekanti Mannem have given their support in providing data and information about the community from the Telangana State. Yelamarthy Madhu (Nandikotkur) and Sankula Mahalingappa (Yemmiganur) supported from Andhra Pradesh. Rudrakshala Srinivas and Daroji Aswa Ramu are the main supporters from the Karnataka State. Krushna Suryawanhsi, Mallesh Suryawanhsi and Somaji Mane are the main pillars from the Maharashtra State for providing information about the Beda (Budga) Jangam caste. Komari Santhosh from Goa greatly contributed data and information and Sankula Marappa, Thatikonda Govinda Raju, Yadavalli Ramesh and Dokka Markondan from Tamil Nadu supported in

providing information. Without their support, it would not be possible to comprehend this book.

This research is carried out by contradictory statements of scheduled caste people. This community is a vira-saiva community, not a scheduled-caste community. And their main accusation about the caste as historically not facing discrimination and untouchability is because this caste vira-saiva Jangam, is not an outcaste Jangam and is a schedule caste. On this allegation, the Beda (Budga) Jangam caste stopped issuing caste certificates in Andhra Pradesh, causing students to lose their educational and employment opportunities.

This research was carried out on three basic issues (1) *whether this Caste is vira-saiva Jangam or not*, (2) *whether this caste historically faced untouchability or not* and (3) *whether this Caste is a tribe or caste*. With these three fundamental questions, I started my research. I collected historical and religious literature on the Beda (Budga) Jangam caste, Bedar and Chenchus, and collected Census Reports from 1881 to 2011 from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana, and Bombay, Madras and Central Presidencies. I also cross-checked District Manuals and District Gazetteers. Castes and Tribes of Southern India, Mysore Tribes and Castes, Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces, Castes and Tribes of HEH the Nizam's Dominions are the basic references for this work.

To answer the first question, whether the Beda (Budga) Jangam caste is a vira-saiva caste, It is historically a tribal community separated from Chenchu, and Bedars are primitive. It was embraced into vira-saivism in the 13th and 14th centuries to escape criminal prosecution, political threats, and persecution. But this caste did not acquire any social status in the vira-saiva religion simply because the Beda (Budga) Jangam followers of the vira-saivism did not practice any custom, belief, or practice in the vira-saivism despite continuing to lead the tribal way of life. The second question is whether this caste historically faced untouchability or not. Yes, this caste faced untouchability within the Vira-saivism and other religions. Several historical books describe the Beda/Bedars as untouchables, depressed classes and outcastes (*chandala*) communities even slaves did not touch this community in the Mysore state.

The third question is whether this Caste is a tribe or a caste. By comparing surnames and exogamous divisions between the Chenchu, Bedar and Beda (Budga) Jangam communities, it is found that they are identical to each other. Their marriage customs, birth and death rituals and other customary practices of these three tribes are the same. Therefore they are the same stock and divided and separated because of their conversions into

various religions such as Dasaries, Jangams, Pindaries, Myasa Bedar and Ramoshis. They are restricted to inter-dine and intermarriages.

This work established that Beda (Budga) Jangam caste is a “*tribal Jangam*” not a Shudra Jangam or other caste Jangam in the Vira-Saivam religion. In South India, this caste also faced untouchability. This caste existed in South India including in Madras Presidency, the demographic study on the caste from 1881 to 2021 clearly shows that this community officially enumerated in South Indian Madras Presidency, and Hyderabad State.

Therefore, this book is an excellent resource for students in Legal Studies, Human Rights, Sociology, Law and Justice, Society and Law, and Population Studies. Research scholars may refer to the above disciplines to learn methodological moves towards their research and thought courses which are useful to policymakers. This work is useful for researchers of the Bedar, Pindari, Ramoshi, Badaga, Dasari, Beda (Budga) Jangam including Vira-Saiva Jangam and the present tribes of Chenchu, Vedan, Irula, Valmiki, and Nakkala in South India.

**Dr. Vibhudi Venkateshwarlu**  
Hyderabad





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**ETHNOHISTORY OF BEDA (BUDGA)****JANGAM**

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**COMPARATIVE STUDY**

Comparative study of the Bedars – Birth ceremonies of the Bedars – Marriage customs of the Bedars – Practice of divorce among the Bedars – Death ceremonies of the Bedars – Food habits of the Bedars – Language of the Bedars – Occupation of the Bedars – Habitation of the Bedars – Social control among the Bedars – Religion of the Bedars – Deities and worship of the Bedars – Social status of the Bedars – Hindu vs. Vira-saiva lingayat religion – Beda (Budga) Jangam and Vira-saiva Jangam – Vira Saiva Jangam community – Gotrams of vira-saiva Jangam – Cultural affinities of Bedar and Chenchus – Cultural affinities of Bedar and Beda (Budga) Jangam – Common exogamous divisions of Chenchu, Bedar, and Beda (Budga) Jangam – Surnames changed among the Beda (Budga) Jangam caste.

Table-I:

**Demographic study of the Badagas**

Endogamous division among the Badagas

Badaga population in the Madras

**Demographic study of the Bedars**

Endogamous division among the Bedars

Bedar population in Hyderabad

Bedar population in Mysore & Karnataka

Bedar population in Bombay & Maharashtra

Bedar population in Madras

**Demographic study of the Chenchus**

Endogamous divisions among the Chenchus

Chenchu population in Hyderabad & Andhra Pradesh

Chenchu population in Madras

Chenchu population in Orissa & Odisha

Chenchu population in Mysore & Karnataka

Chenchu population in Central provinces & Berar

**Demographic study of the Dasaris**

Endogamous divisions among the Dasaris

Dasari population in Hyderabad & Andhra Pradesh

Dasari population in Madras & Tamil Nadu

Dasari population in Mysore & Karnataka

Dasari population in Bombay & Maharashtra

**Demographic study of the Irular**

Endogamous divisions among the Irular

Irular population in Mysore & Karnataka

Irular population in Madras & Tamil Nadu

**The Jangams**

Heterogeneous divisions of Jangams in Madras

Heterogeneous divisions of Jangams in Hyderabad

Heterogeneous divisions of Jangams in Bombay

Jangam population in Telangana & A.P.

Jangam population in Karnataka

Jangam population in Maharashtra

Jangam population in Tamil Nadu

**Demographic study of the Nakkala**

Endogamous divisions among the Nakkala

Nakkala population in Madras

**Demographic study of the Pindari**

Pindari population in Hyderabad

Pindari population in Mysore

Pindari population in Bombay & Maharashtra

Pindari population in Madras

**Demographic study of the Ramoshi**

Ramoshi population in Bombay

**Demographic study of the Valmiki**

Valmiki population in Mysore

Valmiki population in Hyderabad

Valmiki population in Madras

**Demographic study of the Vedan**

Endogamous divisions among the Vedan

Vedan population in Madras

**Demographic study of the Yanadi**

Endogamous divisions among the Yanadi

Yanadi population in Hyderabad & Andhra Pradesh

Yanadi population in Madras

**Table-II:**

Demographic study of the Beda (Budga) Jangam

Census of India-1911

Beda (Budga) Jangams in Andhra Pradesh

Beda (Budga) Jangams in Karnataka

Beda (Budga) Jangams in Maharashtra

Census of India-2001

Beda (Budga) Jangams in Andhra Pradesh

Beda (Budga) Jangams in Karnataka

Beda (Budga) Jangams in Maharashtra

Census of India-1991

Beda (Budga) Jangams in Andhra Pradesh

Beda (Budga) Jangams in Karnataka

Beda (Budga) Jangams in Maharashtra

Census of India-1981  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Andhra Pradesh  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Karnataka  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Maharashtra

Census of India-1971  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Andhra Pradesh  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Karnataka  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Maharashtra

Census of India-1961  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Andhra Pradesh  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Karnataka  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Maharashtra

Census of India-1921  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Hyderabad

Census of India-1901  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Hyderabad

Census of India-1891  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Hyderabad

Census of India-1881  
Beda (Budga) Jangams in Madras

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He is an Asst. Professor, worked at PMR Law College, and Part- Time Lecturer at PG College of Law, Osmania University, Hyderabad, He has 10 years of practical experience as an advocate in Hyderabad.

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